

Lt. Gov. Cuts Ribbon Rededicating Mary Plantation



Louisiana Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne cuts the ceremonial ribbon rededicating Mary Plantation, the oldest building in Plaquemine Parish, after extensive renovations following Hurricane Issac. New Orleans hotelier Blake Miller who owns the plantation, looks on joined by both family, local politicians, and celebrities. Built in 1723, the plantation is located about 22 miles downriver of New Orleans on the East Bank of the Mississippi River in the city of Braithwaite. Restored to its former glory, the Spanish plantation mansion is beautiful, while the grounds are magnificent with centuries old oak trees gracing the some 7 1/2 acres.

Lodging is available on site at Mary Plantation in the Plantation House, the Carriage House and - in early 2015 – Mary's Guest House. Mary's charming Carriage House sits adjacent to the main house and features a beautifully furnished living and dining room, a delightful bedroom that sleeps up to four people, and a galley style kitchen beautifully

furnished and ideal for an intimate weekend get-away or honeymoon weekend. Whether it's an elegant garden wedding amidst Mary's breathtaking grove of ancient oaks, an intimate sit-down dinner for close friends and family, a simple ceremony in charming Mary Chapel, Mary Plantation is truly a romantic, fairytale setting. No matter if you're considering an intimate or extravagant affair, Mary Plantation will work with you to create what you desire.

For additional information, visit www.MaryPlantation.com.



Mary Plantation's Blake Miller & Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne



Sashay You Win!

by Tony Leggio

On Monday, May 19, almost the entire city of New Orleans (and many locals living around the country) was glued to their television sets. Bars were packed to capacity, friends gathered at numerous house parties and many were glued to their iPhones or computers watching the outcome of a **RuPaul's Drag Race Season Six**.

For those not familiar with the show, it is sort of like the Super Bowl of Drag where 14 drag queens from around the country vie for the title of America's Top Drag Superstar. This is a battle supreme in which beating face, glittering gowns and fierce lip syncing are all part of what it takes for one of these girls to go home with the crown and \$100,000.

But the finale of this year's competition has special meaning for those of us in the Crescent City (and currently New York); our very own Bianca del Rio was in the Top Three. Besting eleven other girls, Bianca along with Adore Delano and Courtney Act sang, sewed, and sashayed their way to the top echelon and now was the moment everyone had been waiting for.

Not since the Saints were in the playoffs have I seen so much excitement around a "game." Like true New Orleanians we came together to show support for our home girl and have a huge party. Bianca is a favorite performer in New Orleans, having done numerous local theatrical productions in the past like **Rent**, **Pageant** and **Murder at Movary Manor**, as well as performing at Oz nightclub, in **Glitz: The Art of Female Impersonation**, and hosting many gay carnival balls. Following Katrina, Roy Haylock (Bianca's alter ego) moved to New York creating an impressive career in not only performing as Bianca but her costume design. Still true to his roots, Roy comes back home often to do shows and emcee the Bourbon Street Awards Costume Contest every Mardi Gras. To know Bianca is to love her. Taking no prisoners, her comedy acts are cutting and sassy. You never want to be on the other end of an argument



with her. She's quick, brazen and drops the F bomb frequently. Bianca/Roy is also kind, generous and humble; and I can think of no better person to wear that crown than him.

Bianca's win was like a victory for the entire New Orleans gay and straight community. Someone very dear to us is making an incredible name for himself and we are so very proud in the same way we were excited when the Saints won the Super Bowl, or one of our many local musicians win a Grammy. From the roar of the crowds in the numerous New Orleans gay bars, I am sure she heard us all the way in Las Vegas.

Bianca my dear, enjoy your reign as Drag Supreme. I for one cannot wait to see all the great things you have in store for your fans in the future. Now it is just a matter of time until your movie **Hurricane Bianca** hits the big screen. For more information on the movie, go to www.hurricanebianca.com. If you want to know more about Bianca, go to www.thebiancadelrio.com.

You can catch Bianca live at B-Bob's on Saturday, June 14th, 12midnight, in Mobile, Alabama.



PRIDE MONTH IS HERE!!!

Saturday, June 7th 2-5pm

Southern Decadence Crawfish Boil

\$20 Donation All-You-Can-EAT!
Fabulous Auction, Music
& Afternoon of FUN!



Friday, June 13th 10pm

Toby's American Drag Survivor

Benefitting
NO/AIDS Walk
Hosted by Electra City
& Tittie Toulouse



Saturday, June 14th 10pm

Crescent City Divas

Special Guest Gay Pride's
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Friday, June 20th 7:30pm

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Southern Decadence Ready to Kick Into High Gear

The 43rd Annual Southern Decadence celebration of gay life, music and culture is kicking into high gear as numerous events leading up to the giant Labor Day Weekend, blowout, August 27-September 1, have been set. For more information, visit www.SouthernDecadence.com or www.Facebook.com/SouthernDecadenceNOLA.

Be sure and join Southern Decadence Grand Marshals XL Chad Boutte, Reba Douglas and Aubrey Synclaire for this exciting time in New Orleans. The Official Southern Decadence Press Party is Saturday, June 14th where the grand marshals will announce the 2014 theme, colors, song and charity. They will also unveil the "official" poster for the 43rd Southern Decadence. Hosted at Bourbon Pub & Parade, 801 Bourbon Street, the event is 8-10pm.

Don't miss the many upcoming fundraising which will ensure a successful Southern Decadence. Funds raised minus expenses benefit the 2014 charity chosen by the grand marshals.

Upcoming fundraisers as of press time include:

Saturday, June 7th...

10am, Day of Decadence fundraiser starts with Garage Sale plus 2pm Crawfish Boil @ The Home of Southern Decadence: The Golden Lantern, New Orleans

2-5pm, Southern Decadence Crawfish Boil benefit hosted by Tittie Toulouse & Electra City, \$20 Donation All-You-Can-EAT! Fabulous auction, music & afternoon of FUN! @ The Four Seasons, Metairie

Saturday, June 21st...

9pm-12midnight Southern Decadence Beer Bust @ The Phoenix, New Orleans

Saturday, June 28th...

8pm, Bay St. Louis Drag Show benefiting Southern Decadence 2014 @ Third Base, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi

Saturday, July 12th...

8pm, SDGM XL Reba Douglas' Birthday Show benefiting Southern Decadence 2014 @ Lucky Pierre's, New Orleans

Saturday, July 19th...

8-10pm, Buy A Boy Auction: Dinner's on Us benefiting Southern Decadence 2014 with hors d'oeuvres by Quartermaster. hosted by Persana

Shoulders @ Oz, New Orleans

Saturday, July 26th...

10pm, Southern Decadence Snatch Game hosted by Lesbian of the Year Misti Ates @ Always Lounge, New Orleans

Saturday, August 2nd...

8-10pm, **Ambush Mag** presents 27th Annual Gay Appreciation Awards Gala benefiting Southern Decadence 2014 @ Oz, New Orleans

Black Tie International Comes to New Orleans June 5-8

On the four day weekend from June 5-8, about 150 members of Black Tie Club International will meet from all over the United States and Canada to enjoy their yearly International Event. Everyone is looking forward to exploring this beautiful city and taking part in its cuisine, touring its historical sites and engaging in what all large groups of Gay gentlemen do, indulging in cocktail parties, dinners, brunches, and a fabulous Black Tie evening.

Black Tie Club International is a group of over 900 men from 21 cities in Canada and the United States. Although each chapter enjoys Black Tie events and parties in their individual cities, once a year they meet at a destination somewhere in the two countries. It is always a thrill to meet and spend time with membership and many of look forward to seeing friends after

quite a period of time.

The club was formed in Toronto, Ontario, Canada in 1990 and spread all around North America. Its sole purpose is to meet gentlemen with the same outlook, single or partnered and of any age. It is strictly a social group and all members are invited to attend the parties of established clubs, all sharing the motto of: Good Fellowship, Excellent Food and Fine Wine.

The closest group to New Orleans is the Black Tie Club in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. If you would like more information about the group, email its International President, Leonard Olds, at oldsrouse@aol.com.

"Who's Your Daddy?" Contest June 14

Find out who will win the "manly" sash this year as the Lords of Leather holds its annual humorous salute to Father's Day on Saturday night June 14th at 10pm at the Phoenix. Contestants will be judged on their appearance while wearing an article of clothing drawn from a grab-bag, a not-so-serious interview, sales of 50/50 raffle tickets, audience applause and who knows what else?? Throw in a \$5 Beer Bust on the bar's patio from 9pm until midnight and it all adds up to an entertaining evening you will not want to miss.

Pride-The Lords of Leather will be selling beer at this year's Pride Family Day Festival on Saturday, June 21st in Duncan Plaza next to City Hall in the CBD. Sales will be from 12 noon until 5pm. Stop by the Lords tent and have a cool one while attending this year's event.

2014 Baton Rouge Pride set for June 28

Plans are in place for a great celebration when the eighth annual Baton Rouge Pride Fest takes place June 28.

The 2014 Baton Rouge Pride Fest is set for noon until 6pm inside the Belle of Baton Rouge Atrium in downtown Baton Rouge, and there's a great lineup for the community resource fair and an entire afternoon of entertainment.

"Every year, Baton Rouge Pride gets bigger, and people say they enjoy it more," says Tom Merrill, chair of the Baton Rouge Pride team. "We hope to have even more participants than ever before this year.

"We've got our resource fair, as well as a great afternoon of entertainment. Plus, there's a special area for the kids. It truly is an event for everyone."

Organizers have invited back all 50-plus nonprofit organizations, groups and businesses that participated in last year's community resource fair, and they're seeking any others interested in participating.

Entertainment for the event includes Baton Rouge's own legendary diva

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Daphne MuShatt, as well as local favorites from the Krewe of Divas. In addition, the Austin Babbist Women will be special guest entertainers along with the Michael Foster Project.

"If you missed the Austin Babbist Women last year, you're really going to want to see them this year, and, of course, if you saw them before, you know they're definitely going to make you laugh," Merrill said.

The events also will include the traditional blessing of relationships conducted by Metropolitan Community Church of Baton Rouge pastor, Rev. Keith Mozingo, and other supportive clergy members, as well as the recognition of two long-serving community leaders as this year's grand marshals

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Pride/GAA Ballot issue out June 17
>DEADLINE: Tues., June 10

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moments in gay new orleans history
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“Alice Brady”

Veteran French Quarter bartender Wilhelmina recalls the first time he met legendary lesbian bar owner Alice Brady:

“I was just a young thing, 19 or 20, around 1979, and I was hanging posters for a fundraiser in all the bars. In one bar on N. Rampart Street, just as I was about tack the poster up, a short, squat lesbian screamed at me, ‘What the fuck are you doing?’ I was terrified and said I was hanging a poster. Then she yelled, ‘Get your nelly ass over here and let me see it.’ She looked at the poster and then growled, ‘Hang the poster up and get the fuck out of here!’ I later got to know Alice and she was one of the kindest people I ever met.”

By all accounts the aforementioned exchange captures the essence of Alice Brady—rough and tough as nails on the exterior, warm and soft-hearted on the inside. She would customarily wear a man’s white shirt with two breast pockets and a skirt. She often drank Teacher’s Scotch and water in a short high-ball glass. A dynamic personality, Brady transformed the lesbian and gay bar scene in New Orleans in the 1950s and 1960s.

In those years, lesbian and gay bars were one of the few places gay folk could be themselves. There was also the Steamboat Club for men and the Gourmet Club, which was essentially a dinner club for lesbian couples. But for the most part, gay socializing occurred in the bars.

Yet going to the bars was not only a safe refuge from the confines of the



straight world, they were also a dangerous place to be because of the constant threat of police raids. Homosexuality was considered a mental disease and any manifestations of gayness, from cross dressing to same sex dancing, were criminal.

Raids were common. In 1953, the New Orleans Police Department conducted a Quarter-wide sting and raided several bars, including the Goldenrod Inn on Frenchmen Street. The Goldenrod was a bifurcated bar with straight couples in the front serving as a cover for the lesbian bar in the back. Forty-three women were arrested at the Goldenrod Inn alone during the raid, one of whom was Doris “Blue” Lunden, who would go on to become a noted lesbian activist.

Lunden, who was eighteen at the time, later recalled her reaction, “That night we had to go to court and I discovered then that they had raided every gay bar in New Orleans. It was like a big cleanup. I had never seen so many gay people in my life. It was really exciting. I almost forgot to be scared about whether I would be convicted or not. My case was dismissed, but I think that set me free in some way.” (quote from *Deviant Eyes, Deviant Bodies* by Chris Strayer.)

It was in that hostile environment that Alice Brady began her career as a lesbian bar owner. A native of Birmingham, Alabama, in 1946 Brady moved to New Orleans, where she lived until her death in 2012 at the age of 84. Upon arriving in New Orleans, Brady eventually secured a job working at the Galley House, a gay bar which was owned by Mary Collins. In 1952, Brady opened her own gay bar called The Mascarade Bar at 819 St. Louis Street (currently Le Roundup). She would later open another bar called Alice Brady’s at 514 Ursulines Avenue. This bar offered live music, featuring a band called A.B.’s Children. Brady went on to open a third

the "official" dish ...from 8

of Baton Rouge Pride.

The events also will be followed by the third annual Equality March from the Belle to the state Capitol building.

For more details on the event, visit www.BRPrideFest.com. To volunteer to help with planning or to find out ways your group or organization can become involved, visit that site or phone 225.907.5251 or email BRPride@bellsouth.net.

NO/AIDS Task Force receives three-year CARF Intl. Accreditation

NO/AIDS Task Force is proud to announce that it has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) International for a three-year accreditation period. Certification by this independent non-profit indicates that the Task Force’s accredited programs have a commitment to continually improving services, encouraging feedback, and serving the community. The behavioral healthcare services of NO/AIDS Task Force, which includes its case management, mental health counseling and

[continued on 12]

bar called Mr. D.’s Hideaway and finally a fourth bar simply called Brady’s at 700 N. Rampart (currently The Ninth Circle).

By 1978, Brady was ready to retire from the bar business and in that year sold Brady’s to Diane DiMiceli. DiMiceli, who had been a regular at Brady’s bars since 1968, remembers how she came to own Brady’s:

“At the time, I owned a neighborhood grocery Uptown. One day Alice called me and said, ‘Number—that’s what she called people she liked—what are you doing next Sunday?’ I went to meet her and she said, ‘I want to sell you my bar. Here’s how much. No negotiating.’ And that was it.”

DiMiceli kept the name Brady’s for a while before changing it to Diane’s. DiMiceli would later open another Diane’s on Jefferson Highway. That bar, along with Kitty Blackwell’s Upstairs/Downstairs on Causeway Boulevard catered to lesbians and gay men in Metairie.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, N. Rampart Street, the edge of the French Quarter, had become the epicenter of gay bar life in New Orleans. Those of a certain age may remember these bars, all on N. Rampart: The Soiled Dove (400 block?), The Finale and Diane’s (at the corner of St. Peter), The Grog (at Orleans), which was also owned by Kitty Blackwell and later Rosemary Pino, Travis’, T.T.’s, and Menefee’s on the lakeside of N. Rampart. Between N. Rampart and Bourbon, there were: Tiger’s, The Clinic, Le Roundup, Gregory’s (now the Double Play), The Post Office (now the Corner Pocket), Pete’s (now Oz) The Caverns (now The Pub), and Café Lafitte in Exile.

Sadly, today there are no lesbian bars in New Orleans. Alice Brady received the Gay Appreciation Award for Lifetime Achievement in 1998. She died on February 25, 2012.



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